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SOME

REASONS

WHY

The People called *QUAKERS* do
absent from the Publique way of Worship,
and cannot Conform thereunto, though they
are exposed to great sufferings because thereof.

AND ALSO

Why they cannot Swear at all, and whether it
be out of Obstinacy, or Conscientiousness resolved.

PRESENTED

In the love and fear of the Lord to the serious Considera-
tion of all Justices, and all others who are moderately
enquiring into this matter, by *J. C.* *K*

WEE are a People that have desired and diligently enqui-
red after the true knowledge of God, & the way in which
he is Worshipped, in which way we desire to walk, and after much
seeking and serious consideration we do find and are perswaded
in our hearts and Consciences,

First, That God is a Spirit, and that his Worship is Spiritual,
according as Christ hath said, *Joh. 4. 24.* and that none are true
Worshippers but such as worship in the spirit and in truth.

Secondly, That Men must first feel and receive a measure of
the Spirit of the Lord, before they can come to know the true
way of Worship, which is only learned in the Spirit, *Ver. 22, 23.*

Thirdly, That no Man upon the Earth, can or ought to pre-
scribe how or after what manner God Almighty is to be Wor-
shipped, so as to impose any practices upon Men, but is to leave
that to him to direct them by his good Spirit in things pertaining
to his Worship, and he is to perswade them thereunto, and that
they ought not to be compelled or forced to the true Worship,

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much less to that which is so justly suspected by many people not to be the true way of Worship.

And it doth appear to us that the publique way of Worship, or the Worship of the Church of *England* is very much different from this Spiritual Worship, for we do see that they have not received the measure of the Spirit of Christ, which leads into all truth; but they do daily rebell and transgress against it, doing those things that they should not, and leaving undone those things which they ought to do, so that they are without Spiritual health, & these cannot be the spiritual Worshippers, for they that do worship in the Spirit, do feel health and peace in it, and therefore we have good reason to absent from the publique way of Worship.

And because that those that do frequent that Worship are not born again of the Spirit of Christ, *Job. 3. 3.* but are still in an unregenerate state, following the pleasures and vanities of sin, and do live in all manner of wickedness, as swearing, lying, drunkenness, whoredom, murder, coufening and cheating, and what other evils may be mentioned, but may be found among those Worshippers, and these are the works and fruits of the flesh, and not of the spirit of God, *Gal. 5.* and therefore we do absent from that Worship.

Besides they do not seek to draw and win People by love and tenderness, and by the example of a good Conversation, but do labour by violent force and compulsion to bring People to their Worship, which the true Worshippers and Christians never did, and do persecute and cause such to suffer, who are otherwise minded that cannot come to their Church and Worship according to their prescriptions, which the true Worshippers never did; but said, if any were otherwise minded God should reveal the same unto them, *Phil. 3. 15.* and they did not by force impose their Religion upon others: But we do believe that that way of imposing of Religion upon People is of Antichrist, and that all that ever do so impose are in the way of Antichrist, and we do and must absent from them.

And also we find their Ministry is much different from the Ministry of the true Church of Christ both in call, maintenance, Doctrine and Conversation; for they were Ministers of the Spirit and not of the Letter, *2 Cor. 3.* neither were they called by man, nor taught by man the things which they did preach, neither did

did they receive it from man, but by the Revelation of Jesus Christ, *Gal. 1.* and they had received his Spirit, by which the deep things of God are revealed, *1 Cor. 2.* But these Ministers are made as *Oxford*, or *Cambridge*, by learning Natural Languages and old Books and Authors, and serve such a time there before they go forth, and when they have attain'd that, then they run when the Lord never sent them, and they use their tongues and say he saith it, when the Lord never spoke to them, nor called them forth to preach his Word, but they are made Ministers by man, and sent out by man, and two or three hundred pounds a year calls them thither, and there they will stay for their bellies, and such the true Prophets and servants of the Lord witnessed against as may be seen, *Isa. 56. Jer. 23. Mich. 3.* and the Ministers of Christ did give freely as they had freely received, according to Christ command, *Mat. 10.* But these Ministers receives and forces Tythes from the People which Christ came to put an end to, *Rom. 10. 4.* And the Apostle said, the Priesthood being changed there is made of necessity a change also of the Law, by which Law Tythes were paid, *Heb. 7.* which the Ministers of Christ never received, much less to force people to pay them, but did witness against them, for they pertained only to the Priests of the first Covenant; and so in their maintenance we find them contrary to the Ministers of Christ; and also they differ in their Doctrine, for the Ministers of Christ did preach that People might wait to receive Christ into their hearts, and that they might know Christ in them, else they were reprobates; and if Christ was in them the body was dead because of sin, and they came to be dead unto sin, and every particular Member of their Church was to know the Spirit of Christ in them, and if any man had not the Spirit of Christ he was none of his, &c. *Romans 8.* But these Ministers tells the people that they are Christians, and the Church of Christ, though they know nothing of this in them, but do live wickedly in sin and unrighteousness, and are dead to truth and feel nothing of the operation of the spirit of Christ in them, but do still sin against it, doing that they should not do, and leaving undone that which they should do, and are not saved from sin nor made free by the truth, and they tell them they must never expect to be free from sin, nor to know the Revelation of Jesus Christ, (as former Christians did) nor to know the power of God to work mightily and effectually in them to destroy the workes of

the Devil while they are on this side the grave, and so still keeps them in blindness and ignorance, ever learning but still laden with sin and divers lusts, and never able to come to the knowledge of the Truth which makes free, as we have seen, and therefore we have denyed them, and we do believe with the Ministers of Christ that the truth makes free, and that it is possible to know Christ so made manifest within as to destroy the Devils works, and to save from sin, and that he that is born of God sins not, we say we believe that such a state is attainable on this side the grave, and yet we do acknowledge there is a state the Saints knew and passed through, in which if we should say we have no sin we deceive our selves, and the truth is not in us, but if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness; and this was spoken to little Children in the truth that they should not sin, *Job. 2.* But there was Fathers that had known the truth, and young men that were strong in whom the Word of God dwelt, that had (take notice) overcome the wicked one, many other things might be mentioned, but these may be sufficient to shew why we deny that Ministry which hath not profited the People at all, but they are proud and covetous, as thousands do know.

Again we do absent from the publique way of Worship because of its deadness and formality, because we cannot find that the immortal Souls of people are refreshed therein, nor that any true and spiritual comfort is received thereby; and we do believe and upon true search and examination do find, and also are perswaded in our Consciences (and that by the spirit of the Lord) that the most part of their Ceremonies and practices in their Worship are but the vain Traditions of Men, and no Heavenly divine institutions, and we may say as the Apostle said in another case, they do not make the Comers thereunto any whit the better, but they are still miserable and dead, and want that which only can give life and satisfaction to the soul; to wit, the Knowledge of Christs appearance in themselves, and of his life and vertue: We might mention many Ceremonies and practices, and speak particularly to them, but we would not be too tedious, but do speak as to the whole in these few words.

And having seen these things that they want the spirit of the Lord to exercise them in their Worship, that they are not born
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of it, that they want the fruits of it, that they force and persecute people that cannot for conscience sake conform to their way of Worship, that their Ministry differs from the Ministry of Christ, in Call, Maintenance, Conversation and Doctrine, and is the very same which the false Prophets and Deceivers in the dayes of old being found in their very steps and practises, &c. That their worship is dead, formal and carnal, and doth not give satisfaction to the soul, we cannot conform to it, but have denyed it upon just ground, and in Conscience to the Lord do absent from it, and not out of obstinacy, as some would accuse us.

And again we do absent from it, because we have found a better way, in which we can trust our soules, and do find health and peace, and spiritual comfort, and true satisfaction in this way in which we now walk with the Lord, and do worship him in spirit and truth, and we do find his living presence in our Assemblings together in the worship and service of God, for we meet together to wait upon him and to perform holy duty to him, and do speak as his spirit moveth in us, and gives us utterance, and to pray in the spirit, and this only is acceptable unto him, and this is spiritual worship when the spirit of the Lord exerciseth Man in the things he performeth towards God, and if his spirit doth not stir or move in us, we are silent, waiting to hear the Lord speaking in our soules, and this is according to the Saints practise; and because we have found great peace and satisfaction to our soules in this way in which we now walk, we cannot deny it what ever we suffer, and we do choose rather to obey the Lord, that we may have and feel his peace in our hearts, then to obey Men to avoid all sufferings.

And because we would not loose that peace, and make ship-rack of our faith, we cannot conform to the publick way of worship, and not out of any wilfulness or obstinacy, and we do desire to spend our dayes in the fear of God, and to walk in justness and righteousness towards all Men, and to do unto every Man, as we would they should do unto us, and to love God with all our hearts, and our neighbours as our selves, and to avoid the sins and gross iniquities and abominations that do daily abound among those that are of the publick way of worship, and we dare not riot in the day time, nor spend our precious time in vanity, nor waste Gods good Creatures, and spend them upon the lusts, which will

will be the cause of Gods severe Judgments to come upon Men and Nations, and we cannot go with multitudes to do evil, but must have respect to the Lord God that made us, to live unto him, that we may dye in his love and favour, and that we may be Heires of that Kingdom which is everlasting, into which the fayers, Lord, Lord, must not enter, but those that do his will, and this is that we seek, and which is our only end and aim the Lord knowes; and if for this we must be hated and afflicted we cannot help it, for we must not deny the Lord, but will trust in him though we dye and perish outwardly for our obedience to him, and because this is our desire and resolution we do absent from the publick way of worship, and cannot have fellowship with the unfruitfull workers and workes of darkness, but do rather reprove them.

And as for our refusing to swear, we would have all men to know,

That it is not out of obstinacy or wilfulness that we do refuse or as though we had any reserve to our selves, because we cannot swear Allegiance to the King, as if we would plot or contrive mischief against him; No God knowes, and his people knowes, and the witness of God in the Consciences of our very adversaries will one day testifie for us, that this is not the cause why we refuse to swear, but it is only and singly in pure obedience and Conscience to the Lord Jesus Christ, who hath said, *swear not at all*, and this is his command unto his followers, though it was said by them of old time, thou shalt not forswear thy self, but shalt perform thine Oathes unto the Lord: they might then swear, for it was commanded, but now Christ being come who is the end of the Law and fulfiller of it, saith, *Swear not at all*, by which it is cleer that all swearing is forbidden, for the Law did forbid and prohibit all vain and frivolefs swearing, and if these words of Christ did reach no further then to prohibit that, (as some would limit them) then Christ had only forbid that which before was forbidden by the Law, but it is very plain his words do extend further, because he repeats what before was forbidden and commanded, and then goes on further, But I say unto you swear not at all, &c. And how he could have spoken more fuller I cannot tell: and also the Apostle *James* preaches the same Doctrine with the

the same absolute prohibition, *But above all things my Brethren swear not,* (for it was so positively forbidden by Christ that he put that as it were above all things) *neither by Heaven nor Earth;* (mark) *nor any other Oath,* no Oath was to be sworn by the true Christians who were brought out of the strife that was among Men, into love, and peace, and good will towards all men; And truly it is a token of darkness and much ignorance, that any Man professing Christianity should have any word to say against such a thing which is so cleerly forbidden, and how many Christians have suffered since for refusing to swear, appears by several ancient Histories; and upon the same account only do we refuse to swear at this day, having received the Christian spirit, which in us saith swear not, and therefore upon this general account we cannot swear Allegiance to the King, but we can and have proffered to promise in faithfulness, and do desire that the same punishment may be inflicted upon those that break their word and promise as on them that breaks their Oathes, and if this were taken it would appear that we make as much conscience (and more) to keep our Promise as any men do their Oathes, and it is to the full as binding to us, for it is a common saying among men, *those that will swear will lie*; and many that will now swear Allegiance to the King to save their outward liberty would soon swear against him upon occasion; and if it had been known that ever we could swear in any case since we were a people, and would not now swear Allegiance to the King, then indeed there were great cause of suspicion; but we have always denied to swear in any case since we knew the truth, and had the Spirit of Christ to guide us, and have suffered upon divers accounts in former days; and therefore, in reason and justice we ought not to suffer in this case for refusing to swear Allegiance to the King, neither ought men to insnare us because of the tenderness of our Consciences to the Lord; for we have always desired the good and happiness of the King and all Men, in this World, and that which is to come; and in as much as we live in the fear of God, and peaceable, it is that which brings honour to good Government & Kings when Subjects do live in the fear of God, and such as do live wickedly in ungodly ways and practices, dishonours God and good Government, and Kings too: And we are for peace, and deny that Spirit that would plot or contrive mischief against the King, or any Man's person; for our Principle

is peaceable, and leads to love and good will towards all Men, which is the Principle of Truth and honesty, as will appear when all false suspicions will die, and the refuge of lies and evil reports will be swept away. And thus we have spoken the truth in nakedness, desiring that it may be for good unto all to whom it may come.

We are lovers of Truth and Righteousness, and every one that truly desires to walk therein, in which alone true Happiness and Everlasting peace is enjoyed by all such as do believe and walk in the Light of Righteousness which leads out of the evil way which the Sons of Men have long run on in, in the time of great darkness, which hath overshadowed the Earth, which shall pass away, and light will shine more and more in the hearts of Men, in which all that do walk shall know the Salvation of God, and partake of his mercies and great loving kindness, and Praise and Magnifie his Glorious Name for evermore.

*Reading Goal the 22th. day
of 5th. Month, 1655.*

THE END.

